THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) While LIC has two housing loan schemes for its policy holders, namely, (i) 'Own Your Home' Scheme (OYH), and (ii) Bima Niwas Yojana (BNY), its Subsidiary, i.e., LIC Housing Finance Ltd. (LIC HFL), formed in June, 1989, is operating for the LIC Policyholders the housing loan schemes namely, (i) Jeeven Niwas, and (ii) Jeevan Kutir. 43 area offices are presently served by LIC HFL and in the remaining centres LIC is operating. As many as 64400 policy holders have applied for housing loans to LIC/LIC HFL during 1991-92. Out of this, as many as 47795 policy holders were given housing loans by LIC/LIC HFL during 1991-92.

(d) The number of housing loans given by LIC/LIC HFL in the State of Madhya Pradesh stands at 1781.

Increase in price of gold

764. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA:
SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:
SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRI SOM PAL:
SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to answer to Unstarred Question 147 given in the Rajya Sabha on 28th April, 1992 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that price of gold which declined soon after the budget proposals were announced, has started showing an upward trend;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) how does the price of gold in India compare with that of the rates at international market;

(d) whether it is also a fact this huge quantity of gold is being cornered by large bullion houses before the Gold Bond Scheme is made operational;

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and its impact on the gold price; and

(f) whether it is also a fact that smuggling of silver has also increased after the budget, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b) Gold prices kept on falling for about three weeks after the presentation of the Central Budget for 1992-93 in response to the liberalised gold import policy. However, due to a variety of forces operating on both demand and supply sides of the domestic market for gold (such as, marriage season, the perceived risks and tax liability on imported gold), prices of gold showed an upward trend in the subsequent weeks. But after the recent announcement of reduced duty on imported gold during the discussion on Finance Bill, the downward trend in gold prices has resumed.

(c) The prices of gold in India continue to rule higher than the rates at international market.

(d) and (e) The Government are not aware of any such move.

(f) Since smuggling is a clandestine activity, it is not possible to ascertain whether smuggling of silver has increased after the presentation of the budget.

Expenditure Incurred on Deputation of Officers Abroad

765. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that permission is accorded by respective Ministers for deputation abroad of officers upto the level of Joint Secretary and if so, since when this procedure is being followed;

(b) the authority which approves deputation of officers above that level in the Ministries and in respect of officers serving in Public Sector Undertakings;

(c) whether the new procedure has resulted in economy of expenditure; and

(d) what is the expenditure incurred on such deputations during the year 1990-91 and 1991-92 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE): (a) Orders have been issued on 21st January, 1992 delegating powers to the Ministries/Departments of the Govt. of India to consider cases of deputations abroad of officers of the level of Joint Secretaries and below and to take final decision with the approval of the Minister-in-charge.

(b) Cases of deputation abroad of officers of the level of Additional Secretaries and above in the Ministeries/Departments require approval of the Screening Committee of Secretaries. Cases of deputation abroad of officers of such level in Public Sector Undertakings are not required to be submitted to the Screening Committee of Secretaries. Such cases are required to be cleared by the Ministeries/Departments concerned with the respective P.S.U.s.

(c) The revised procedure is intended to cut short time in deciding deputation cases. While excersing delegated powers, the Ministries/Departments are required to ensure that the foreign travel budget is not exceeded.

(d) The information is not centrally maintained and will have to be collected from all Ministries/Deptts/Offices of the Govt. of India. The time and labour involved in collecting the information may not be commensurate with the object to be achieved.

State Bank's Proposal on Closure of Dealing Centres

766. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Bank Management is considering to close down the dealing centres at Bombay, Madras and New Delhi Overseas Branches and to abolish the posts of dealers by replacing them with rate centres and rate officers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what is the exact position regarding dealing centres as of now ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Dealing centres have been set up at Bombay, Madras and New Delhi by State Bank of India solely out of commercial necessity and these centres continue in the interest of better customer service.

उत्तर प्रदेश में बैंकों की शाखाओं का खोला जाना

767. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव** : क्या **वित्त** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या अग्रेणी बैंकों द्वारा गत वर्ष उत्तर प्रदेश में आजमगढ़ जौनपुर, मऊ, सुल्तानपुर, फैजाबाद और गाजीपुर में शाखाएं खोले जाने के बारे में कोई प्रस्ताव प्राप्त हुए हैं,

(ख) यदि हां, तो उनका ब्यौरा क्या है ; और

(ग) सरकार द्वारा इस संबंध में क्या कार्यवाही की गई है ?

वित्त मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री दलबीर सिंह) : (क) से (ग) आजमगढ़, मऊ, जिलों के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में बैंक शाखाएं खोलने के लिए उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य सरकार के माध्यम से भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक को कोई आवेदन प्राप्त नहीं हुआ है । यद्यपि, जौनपुर एवं सुल्तानपुर जिलों के बारे में आवेदन राज्य सरकार के माध्यम से